

Section II

The Plan: Vision, Goals, Policies, Actions

This Comprehensive Plan is Based on a Long Term Vision Created by Local Citizens

This Plan is “vision-driven”, meaning that it is based upon a defined, preferred long-term future for the County. The vision was created by the appointed Citizen Advisory Committee, based upon what it heard from the citizens at large during the community input meetings. Broad goals, based upon the vision, serve as the organizational basis for the policies and actions of the Plan.

The Plan provides policy guidance at various levels of detail, from broad goals, to specific implementation actions. It also provides policy guidance for the various geographic sub-areas of the County, as well as for countywide resource topics such as natural resources, economic resources, historic resources, etc.

This Plan has a Clear Policy Structure

As defined in detail in Section I of this Plan, the terms that provide the Plan’s policy structure can be understood as a hierarchy, from the general to the specific. These elements provide the organizing framework for the plan, and are defined as follows:

Vision: A description of the ideal desired state of the community in the long-term future.

Goal: A desired, ideal end-state for a particular community resource or feature. (example: “preserve the quality of natural resources”)

Strategy / Policy: A course of action to take in pursuing a long-term goal. (example of a broad strategy: “protect water quality”; example of a specific policy: “promote the setting aside of floodplain lands in open space during the development process”)

Action: A specific task or project implemented to carry out a policy, typically one of the following:

- *Projects* are single-event efforts that have a clear beginning and end (example: “pursue better mapping of floodplains in the County”)
- *Programs* are defined as ongoing implementation efforts (example: “promote regular inspections of septic systems”)
- *Regulations* are provisions that are adopted into local or state laws (example: “amend zoning and subdivision ordinances to require BMPs for new development”)

A. Vision: What Does the County Want to Be by Mid-Century?

A “Vision” is a description of the desired state of the community in the long-term future. Following is the Vision of Rockingham County that underpins this Comprehensive Plan. It is based fully on the input from citizens at large and on the deliberations of the appointed Citizen Advisory Committee.

Vision of the Future of Rockingham County

(Affirmed by the Citizen Advisory Committee, February 23 and June 25, 2002)

Overall Vision

In the year 2020 and beyond, Rockingham County will become an even better place to live, work and recreate for its residents and for visitors. The County will retain the essential historic attributes that make it a great place, including the clean natural environmental resources, the beauty of the farmland and mountains, the harmonious relationship between agricultural and residential land uses, the balanced and vibrant economy and the diverse yet harmonious society with many different cultures. Rockingham County will allow for healthy, managed growth while protecting and capitalizing on the assets which have encouraged people to come here in the first place. The actions of citizens and businesses of the County will reflect our understanding that we do not “own” the land; rather we only borrow it from our children. The County will be a place where our children can live and enjoy the same and better quality of life that we have enjoyed.

Agricultural, Environmental and Historic Resources

Agriculture will continue to be a major part of the local economy and the beautiful, rural landscape. Rockingham County will remain the leading agricultural county in Virginia. We will have improved the quality of our air, water and soil resources through well-planned development and good farming practices that will create a truly sustainable agriculture. Our rivers, creeks and groundwater resources will be in a nearly natural condition. We will have protected our environment by ensuring that farming, industrial and development practices do not deplete or contaminate natural resources. We will have protected and preserved our archeological and historic buildings and sites for the benefit of future generations.

Pattern of Development

The pattern of new development will reflect the County’s success in achieving controlled, orderly growth. The County will have maintained its rural, agricultural nature by directing new development to areas in or near existing towns and communities served by public water and sewer, and by curtailing development in rural areas served by private wells and septic systems. Public water and sewer service will have been expanded in concert with increases in population and employment. All new development and infrastructure will have occurred in concert with the County’s Comprehensive Plan.

New developments will be community friendly, with mixed-use centers and open space in and around them. These new developments will be relatively small scale and interspersed with plenty of open land and recreational areas, transitioning to open farmland and blending into the surrounding rural environment. New developments will feature “town-like” residential lots of relatively smaller size and higher density in order to provide pedestrian-friendly streets, interconnected with walking and bicycle paths, and with more trees preserved and planted. The County’s development pattern will feature a mix of growth and agriculture that is sustainable over the long term. Industrial and housing growth will be strategically located in areas near existing infrastructure and major traffic ways.

Transportation

The transportation system will be safe, efficient and economical, and will reinforce the pattern of new development. Existing roadways will have been improved to reasonably accommodate increases in traffic, and new roads will have been carefully located, designed and built to accommodate increases in population while reinforcing an orderly development pattern focused on existing communities. A connector road system around Harrisonburg will have been completed to accommodate future traffic demand and provide a safe and efficient means of moving through and around the City in both the north-south and east-west directions. The connector road system will provide a firm edge to the urban expansion of the larger Harrisonburg community.

Multi-use pathways will have been developed along major roadways to create a Countywide network for pedestrians, bicycles and buggies. The existing state road network will have been upgraded in key locations to create a good road network linking major communities. Public transportation will have been expanded to provide service to those who do not or cannot use personal motor vehicles.

Economy

The local economy will be strong and diverse, with high levels of employment in the industrial and service sectors. This will have produced increases in income and low tax rates, all reinforced by continued growth of the universities. The local tax system will be fair and diversified. Tourism and technology businesses will have driven expansion of the local economy. The County will continue to promote the development of modern telecommunications infrastructure to support continued economic development.

Public Services

Public services will be efficient and affordable, and designed and located to meet the needs of citizens of all ages and incomes. The County will have maintained a strong commitment to education, and schools will have used technology to reduce the size and service area of schools and allowed them to become true focal points of smaller communities. All citizens will be well served by an extensive system of park facilities and recreation programs. Good health care will be affordable and available to every citizen.

Housing

Safe, attractive, high quality housing will be available to households of all income levels. Housing for low and moderate-income levels will be dispersed within neighborhoods, but all will be located in areas which are conveniently accessible to public services. Higher density housing will be located in the Towns and the City.

Governance

Cooperation among local governments will be strong. Rockingham County and the City of Harrisonburg will coordinate all of their policies including land use, transportation, public services and economic development in order to gain efficiencies and economic benefits for both jurisdictions. The County will coordinate its actions closely with the Towns. Citizen involvement will become an important underpinning of all local governmental decision-making, which will allow local governments to become pro-active in identifying problems and fostering solutions.

B. Goals: Specific Long Term Desires for Key Resources

Fourteen major goals were established to provide guidance for achieving the Vision. Each goal is critically important to the long-term quality of life of Rockingham County. None of the goals stands alone – they are mutually interdependent and progress toward one goal will often support progress toward another. Like the Vision statement, these goals are all based on the input from citizens and on the deliberations of the Citizen Advisory Committee.

- Goal 1. Preserve the Quality of Natural Resources**
(surface water, groundwater, air, soil, quiet, night sky)
- Goal 2. Preserve the Scenic Beauty of the Landscape**
(farm fields, vistas, mountains, forests, open land, parks and recreation areas)
- Goal 3. Preserve Agricultural Industry and Economy**
(income, land and jobs - not necessarily type of crops / products)
- Goal 4. Achieve Diversity of Employment in industries that are compatible with the County's desire for environmental protection, high and stable employment levels, increasing incomes, and a strong agricultural sector**
- Goal 5. Achieve a Strong and Compatible Tourist Industry**
- Goal 6. Achieve a Balance of Compatible Land Uses and Communities in which people can live, work and play**
- Goal 7. Achieve a Range of Housing Types and Values to meet the needs of all income levels**
- Goal 8. Achieve Efficient Delivery of Public Facilities and Services**
(education, administration, utilities)
- Goal 9. Achieve Efficient and Effective Public Safety Responses**
(fire, rescue, law enforcement)
- Goal 10. Preserve and Improve Free Flow of Traffic and Improve the Safety of the Road System**
- Goal 11. Preserve/Improve Accessibility of Non-Motorized Traffic**
(pedestrians, bicycles, horses, buggies)
- Goal 12. Preserve Historic Buildings and Sites**
- Goal 13. Achieve a Rich and Diverse Community of Arts, Culture and other features of the "life beyond work"**
- Goal 14. Achieve Community Identity, Cooperation, Spirit and Solidarity**

C. Policies for Growth Management: Guiding Future Land Use & Infrastructure

1. Planning Framework Based Upon Key Assumptions and Analysis

The Comprehensive Plan, as approved April 24, 2004, was based on 2000 census data and 1990 to 2000 growth trends. Since 2000, the County has experienced population and housing growth that has exceeded that of the 1990s. The County's plans and policies for guiding and managing development, infrastructure, environmental quality, and land use changes are based on the analysis of annual data collected since the last census. Due to the increased growth rate (1.6% in the 1990s to 1.8% since 2000), the County will annually review the Plan in order to stay responsive to the needs of its citizens. While this Plan looks ahead to 2050, the growth assumptions described below primarily focus on 2005 to 2010.

- 1) **The County will experience steady growth.** Regional growth pressures will cause the County's population, housing needs, and employment to continue to grow at a steady rate. The County expects to have to absorb approximately 11,000 additional people by 2010 and 38,000 additional people by 2020, with roughly two and a half times that amount by the year 2050. This will bring the County's total population to more than 84,000 in 2010, 110,000 in 2020, and roughly 200,000 in 2050.

From 2000 to 2004, an average of 895 residential units were constructed annually. This trend is expected to continue through the decade, resulting in the need for 5,370 additional residences between 2005 and 2010. If this Plan's policies for compact, efficient development are implemented, in which 80% of new residential development is located in designated urban growth areas with public water and sewer service, this will result in the development of approximately 2,100 additional acres in urban growth between 2005 and 2010, 5,700 acres by 2020, and 16,000 acres by 2050. This assumes an overall urban density of approximately two residential units per gross acre, which is an overall density for the urban growth area, not a site-specific density. The overall gross residential density in the urban growth areas accounts for undeveloped land, commercial and industrial land, open space, road rights-of-way, etc. Approximately 195 gross acres of additional urban land would be expected to be developed with employment uses by 2010, 440 acres by 2020 and 1,000 acres by 2050.

If the remaining 20% of housing development is located in the rural areas using private wells and septic systems, approximately 3,000 acres will be developed by 2010, 8,600 acres by 2020, and 25,000 acres by 2050 (assuming overall gross densities of approximately one unit per three acres).

Note that these forecasts assume that development will occur at the lower end of the density ranges defined in this plan; however, less land will be converted if

development occurs at the higher ranges of the urban densities, resulting in an even more compact development pattern.

Assuming that approximately 315,000 acres of undeveloped land remains in the County (not including national forest and national park land) this pattern and magnitude of development will leave approximately 310,000 acres remaining available for agricultural, forestal and rural residential development in the 2010, 300,000 in 2020, and roughly 273,000 acres available in 2050. These estimates are summarized in the table below.

**TABLE 2-1
LAND AREA BY DEVELOPMENT TYPE**

Type of Development	Average Gross Density	Total Acres Needed for Development		
		Total Acres by 2010	Total Acres by 2020	Total Acres by 2050
Urban Residential	2 units per acre	2,100 urban acres	5,700 urban acres	16,000 urban acres
Rural Residential	.33 unit per acre	3,000 rural acres	8,600 rural acres	25,000 rural acres
Employment (urban)	25 jobs per acre	195 urban acres	440 urban acres	1,000 urban acres
Total		5,295 acres	14,740 acres	42,000 acres

Additional information used in the 2005 Annual Review is located in the Appendix.

- 2) **The County will influence the pattern of growth.** In order to accommodate this level of development in a manner that causes the least negative impact and the most positive benefit to current and future citizens, the County will take the necessary measures to ensure that new development will be:
 - concentrated mainly in areas served by public water and sewer (designated as Urban Growth Areas), including areas in and around the incorporated towns and adjacent to designated major road corridors. The County's objective will be for 80% of new development to be located in these designated areas.
 - designed to accommodate not only motor vehicles, but also pedestrians and bicycles, in an efficient and convenient pattern, in general accord with the principles of traditional urban design as set forth in this plan.
 - designed to create a "sense of place" and a clear identity for each new neighborhood and community in general accord with the principles of traditional urban design.
- 3) **The County will use the Comprehensive Plan as a firm guide.** All new development is expected to conform to the policies of the Comprehensive Plan in

terms of location, intensity, timing and design, in order to help achieve the goals of the Plan.

The County will enforce these guidelines through decisions on rezonings and special use permits, as well as decisions on public investments. New residential development within the Urban Growth Areas will be encouraged to occur through a rezoning process, using conditional zoning procedures, including proffers of significant public infrastructure in order to help offset the impacts on the existing community and to ensure that the new development conforms to the policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



Singers Glen

2. Conceptual Plan for Phasing Development to 2010, 2020 and 2050

Phased Development. This Comprehensive Plan sets forth a conceptual plan for the future location, form and intensity of land uses in the County, based upon the major constraints and opportunities of environmental features, infrastructure elements and settlement patterns. The plan calls for phasing urban development (on public water and sewer) in an orderly manner, based upon the planned extension and upgrading of public utilities and roads. The intent is to limit the amount of land that is needed to serve the expected population increases while developing that land in a manner and pattern that will create the highest overall quality of life for all local citizens.

The phasing plan is based mainly on the existing settlement pattern and the opportunities for logical and orderly expansions of public infrastructure. Land uses are planned to respond to the upgrades to this infrastructure in terms of location, form and timing. The land use plan maps of this plan are general in nature. However, in keeping with the purposes and function of a comprehensive plan, the pattern, relationships and magnitude of urban land development set forth herein are intended to be followed closely. The County may make adjustments during the course of time

as development proposals are reviewed and as public infrastructure plans move forward.

Major Features of the Conceptual Land Use Plan. The conceptual land use plan maps show the general pattern and timing of future land uses that the County will pursue, in concert with landowners. The plan has several key features:

Time Horizons. The conceptual land use plan maps designate three major time horizons to serve as a framework for guiding land development and infrastructure. The target years are 2010, 2020 and 2050. The vision and goals of this plan are focused on the 2020 and 2050 time horizons, while the more specific policies and actions are focused on the 2010 and 2020 time horizons. These maps show the general land use classifications that are planned for each defined Urban Growth Area. These classifications are defined in the text in Part C. 3. of Section II.

Following the Conceptual Land Use Plan maps are Conceptual Transportation Plan maps, which are also presented as three distinct maps, one for each time horizon (2010, 2020, 2050). The transportation networks shown in these maps distinguish the functional classification of each road link. Also indicated on these maps are key corridors for which the County, in conjunction with VDOT and adjacent landowners, will prepare detailed access management plans, in order to ensure the most efficient and safe function of these key links. These maps show the location of planned major improvements to existing roads, as well as new road links that will be needed in order to serve the planned land uses. The maps show that the road networks are designed to be expanded in conjunction with new development and to serve that new development, as well as the additional through-traffic that is expected to occur on certain road links in each future time frame. The road network is planned to be expanded only to serve new development in accord with this plan, not to promote new development that would not otherwise occur.

Infrastructure. Public utilities, public facilities and the road and trail network are key elements of the infrastructure framework that supports the planned land uses. Extensions and improvements of the infrastructure provide both the stimuli and the constraints for land development and conversion. Thus, the land use framework is based upon planned infrastructure upgrades, especially water, sewer and roads. The following conceptual public water and sewer phasing map shows the general location of current and planned public water and sewer. The designation of Urban Growth Areas to be served by public water and sewer are tied to the three time horizons, as are the conceptual land use plan maps and the conceptual transportation plan maps.

Land Use Categories. The actual density and form of land development will be critical to achieving the County's defined long-term goals. Thus, the Conceptual Land Use Plan maps designate the preferred pattern of land use for the future Urban Growth Areas as they become converted from rural to urban over the course of time, in concert with the phasing concept. The specific expectations for the pattern and density of all land uses are defined in the following section on land use categories.

These category definitions and descriptions support and reinforce the graphic depictions represented by the Conceptual Land Use Plan maps. Especially important are the residential density guidelines contained in the land use descriptions, which apply to the conceptual maps.

Insert Fig. 2-1. Conceptual Public Water & Sewer Phasing Map-2010, 2020, & 2050

3. Policies for Integrating Land Use, Transportation & Utilities

To provide for the increase in population and jobs in the County, development must successfully integrate land use, transportation and utilities. To facilitate this, a set of ten major land use categories has been defined, each with specific policy guidelines for land development and infrastructure within the category.

The categories include:

Agricultural Reserve

Environmental Resource Area

Greenways

Historic Preservation Area

Community Residential

Mixed Use Center

Commercial

Industrial

Town / City

Public Lands

Other Areas (Urban Growth Areas, Special Corridors)

Following is a description and the specific policy guidelines for each land use category. Note that some of the categories are essentially overlay areas that overlap other land use categories. In such cases, the policy provisions are meant to be cumulative. Where conflicts occur, the more restrictive policies take precedence. The land use categories are shown on the Conceptual Land Use Plan maps, which follow the descriptions.

Agricultural Reserve

Rockingham County considers agriculture both an essential way of life and a significant sector in its economy. One of the primary goals of the Comprehensive Plan is to preserve the agricultural industry and economy. The Agricultural Reserve is planned for agricultural uses and uses that support agriculture as a viable way of life and economic enterprise. The formation of Agricultural and Forestal Districts is encouraged within the Agricultural Reserve.

Agricultural Uses. Within this area, many forms of agriculture are appropriate, including crop production, grazing of livestock, intensive livestock and poultry production, dairying, orchards, viniculture, aquaculture, silviculture and horticulture. Uses that support agriculture are also appropriate for this area - with proper

infrastructure and buffering - including feed mills, sawmills, livestock sales pavilions, agricultural equipment repair, farm markets and wayside stands.

Other Uses. Because of the changing economics of agriculture, other uses might be appropriate for the agricultural area that could provide supplemental income to the farm. These uses could include: bed and breakfast enterprises, country inns, rural retreats, riding academies and camps, farm camps, history camps, demonstration farms, crop mazes, battlefield reenactment parks, and similar uses.

Existing Uses. The Agricultural Reserve also contains other existing uses: residences, rural centers, and rural commercial uses that are served by wells and septic systems. The rural residential areas will not be permitted to expand unless the residences can be served by public water and sewer. The rural centers, or small villages, are Bergton, Briery Branch, Fulks Run, Hinton, Keezletown, Lacey Spring, Linville, Penn Laird, Port Republic, and Singers Glen. The rural centers are a mix of residences and neighborhood-scale businesses that have served the surrounding communities for many years. This plan recommends, in the absence of public water and sewer services, limiting the expansions of the rural centers in order to reduce potential impacts on agricultural activities. New multi-lot subdivisions and commercial areas should be directed to the Urban Growth Areas planned around Harrisonburg, McGaheysville and Massanutten, and the towns as delineated on the conceptual land use maps.

Infrastructure. The Agricultural Reserve is designated not only to support the agricultural economy, but also to retain the rural character and scenic beauty of Rockingham County that so many citizens value and which is also a primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan. Limitations on non-agricultural uses will help in preserving these valued scenic qualities. This plan also recommends that the County work with farmers and other agricultural sector entrepreneurs to design and locate new buildings to protect and enhance the scenic quality of the Agricultural Reserve, especially as viewed from roadways. In order to maintain a rural environment, infrastructure such as roads and utilities, should remain rural in character, function and intensity. Thus, public sewer and water systems are not appropriate for this area and roads should be designed, built and expanded only in concert with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, so as to limit the impacts on the Agricultural Reserve area.

Environmental Resource Area

The Environmental Resource Area encompasses:

- 1) 100-year floodplains along the County's rivers and streams within the Agricultural Reserve, as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and
- 2) steep wooded slopes, primarily adjacent to the National Park and Forest.

These are environmentally sensitive areas where agricultural, silvicultural, and development activities can cause significant adverse impacts on water quality if not carefully executed. These areas are particularly unsuited to development because of either high flood potential and/or poor quality soils for on-site sewage disposal systems. Public water and sewer service are not planned for these areas.

Agricultural Uses. Agricultural and silvicultural activities are appropriate in the Environmental Resource Area, though the implementation of farm and forest plans incorporating best management practices is to be highly encouraged by the County. The floodplains must be the focus of riparian land protection through Virginia's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and conservation easement donation programs sponsored by various state and local land trusts. The formation of Agricultural and Forestal Districts is encouraged within the Environmental Resource Area.

Residential and Other Uses. Development of residential and other uses is highly discouraged in the Environmental Resource Area; performance standards should be developed and applied to protect the environmental values of floodplains and wooded slopes as well as protect development from the hazards of flooding and unstable slopes.

The County may pursue the development of trail systems within the environmental reserve to connect the National Park and Forest to the towns and planned growth areas.

Greenways

The 100-year floodplains along rivers and streams within and connecting the towns and planned growth areas are designated as Greenways on the future land use maps. These are the 100-year floodplains mapped by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Greenways are planned for natural and landscaped open space and recreational uses. They serve as "green infrastructure" providing protection of development from flooding and riparian water quality protection benefits. A system of bicycle and walking trails is planned within the greenways to provide recreational and alternative transportation opportunities to residents of the County's growth areas.

Historic Preservation Area

The Historic Preservation Area is defined by the boundaries of the Cross Keys and Port Republic Battlefield Study Areas as delineated in *Study of Civil War Sites of the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia* (National Park Service, September, 1992). The County may choose to add other Historic Preservation Areas, over time, with subsequent plan amendments.

The Cross Keys and Port Republic Historic Preservation Area is planned primarily for agricultural uses with similar character to the Agricultural Reserve. The historic

Village of Port Republic is located entirely within this Historic Preservation Area and is planned primarily for residential uses with the museum, church, and country store preserved as they are today. The Cross Keys and Port Republic Historic Preservation Area is not planned for public water and sewer service. The County will refrain from constructing new roads and major improvements to existing roads that would significantly adversely impact the battlefields.

The Cross Keys and Port Republic Historic Preservation Area is appropriate for the application of preservation measures, such as:

- Purchase of development rights (land and easements)
- Acceptance of donations of development rights
- Nomination to the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register
- Adoption of historic zoning districts for the battlefields and the Village of Port Republic
- Promotion of the creation and expansion of agricultural and forestal districts.

Community Residential

Community Residential Areas, shown on the Conceptual Land Use maps as Residential, will encompass the primary future urban residential neighborhoods in Rockingham County. They are concentrated in defined growth areas around the City of Harrisonburg and the Towns of Timberville, Broadway, Dayton, Bridgewater, Mt. Crawford, Grottoes, and Elkton, the Village of McGaheysville and Massanutten Resort.

Land Use Pattern and Urban Design. These areas are planned for a variety of housing types, but primarily single-family detached homes, at a net density of two (2) to six (6) dwelling units per acre for any particular project. Net densities for particular projects would be somewhat higher than gross densities due to the subtraction of non-residential sites, as well as floodplains and other non-buildable areas. Residential development at the high end of this density range is encouraged in order to make efficient use of the land within the growth areas and to prevent suburban sprawl. The County will consider innovative townhouse and apartment layouts and designs and small-lot single-family detached housing types like patio homes and zero lot-line development to accomplish this goal. Manufactured home parks and subdivisions will be encouraged in appropriate locations within the defined growth areas.

In order to receive approval of residential densities at the higher end range, the County will expect new development to provide the necessary infrastructure (roads, sidewalks, civic sites and utilities) to serve the proposed development, and to be designed in a pedestrian-friendly manner with an interconnected street network. Thus, to the greatest extent feasible, new development should be in accord with the traditional neighborhood design principles set forth below.

Principles of Traditional Neighborhood Development. Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs) will be permitted and encouraged in Community Residential Areas. TNDs offer a new type of development that harkens back to the development patterns of older towns and cities and offers a new model for development that updates pre-1940s traditional development patterns of towns and cities. They feature the following key principles and attributes:

Organization and Structure

- 1) The neighborhood has a discernible center, often a square or a green, a busy or memorable street corner, and/or a prominent civic building (a transit stop can be located at this center). The center may be surrounded by a mixed-use retail/office core area. The Mixed Use Centers shown on the future land use maps of this Plan may serve as neighborhood centers, although for some neighborhoods, the centers may be smaller and less prominent.
- 2) Most of the dwellings are within a five-minute walk of the neighborhood center, an average of roughly 1,500 feet, producing a total area of approximately 150 acres.
- 3) Small playgrounds or pocket parks are located within 500 feet of every dwelling.
- 4) To the extent possible, an elementary school is close enough so that most children can walk from their home.
- 5) Development is located in environmentally suitable areas, designed to preserve important environmental and cultural resources
- 6) Civic identity and a sense of community are reinforced through:
 - a system of parks and public and institutional uses
 - a formal neighborhood governance association to decide and/or advise on matters of maintenance, security and physical change (taxation remains the responsibility of the County).

Streets

- 7) The neighborhood is served by many transportation modes, including motor vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle and transit; motor vehicles and parking lots do not dominate.
- 8) The neighborhood's streets form a connected network, providing a variety of pedestrian and vehicular routes to any destination, which disperses traffic.

(The streets are laid out generally in a grid pattern, forming blocks of about 1,200 feet in perimeter length each). Cul-de-sacs should be avoided; small “eyebrows” (short road loops with just a few houses) protruding from the main street should be used instead.

- 9) The circulation network includes streets, alleys, sidewalks and paths.
- 10) The streets are relatively narrow and shaded by rows of trees, often with on-street parking, which slows traffic, creating an environment suitable for pedestrians and bicycles.
- 11) Buildings in the neighborhood center are placed close to the street, creating a feeling of human scale and a strong sense of place.
- 12) Parking lots and garage doors rarely front the street; parking is at the rear of buildings, usually accessed by alleys.
- 13) Certain prominent sites at the termination of street vistas or in the neighborhood center are reserved for civic buildings which provide sites for community meetings, education, religious or cultural activities.

Land Uses

- 14) The neighborhood has a mix of uses so that residents have opportunities to live, recreate, learn, worship, and even work and shop in their neighborhood
- 15) There is a variety of dwelling types, densities and costs: single family houses, townhouses, apartments and accessory units, for all kinds of people, including younger, older, singles, families, lower income, upper income, etc.
- 16) There are a variety of shops and offices at the core or the edge of the neighborhood to supply the weekly needs of a household.
- 17) A small ancillary building is permitted within the backyard of each house, which may be used as a rental unit, an in-law suite, or place to work (e.g. office or craft workshop).

Some townhouse and multifamily residential areas would be allowed and encouraged in TNDs, but should surround or be located within walking distance of the Mixed Use Centers shown on the future land use maps and described below. Where townhouse and/or multifamily residential development is included in a TND outside of a Mixed Use Center, the overall residential density of the entire TND may increase to the maximum of six (6) dwelling units per net acre of residential area.

The organizing framework of a TND is an area of land that constitutes a five minute walk, or a circle of about one-quarter mile radius (about 150 acres). Commercial and

higher density residential uses should be focused within such a core area, which could include the Mixed Use Center concept described below.

Infrastructure. New development within Community Residential Areas must be served by public water and sewer systems. Such areas must also exhibit a grid of interconnected streets with well-spaced collector roads in order to create a connected community and an efficient transportation network. The grid may be modified to reflect topographic and other environmental constraints. Disconnected developments with large numbers of cul-de-sacs are inappropriate for Community Residential Areas.

A system of bicycle and pedestrian paths shall be constructed throughout the Community Residential Areas. In areas with a high concentration of buggy users, buggy lanes should also be provided. Provision of these alternative transportation modes will help reduce automobile traffic levels and therefore preserve a more livable environment for current and future citizens.

Community Residential Areas shall also contain parks and civic use sites (churches, schools, recreation centers, cultural institutions, etc.). The County plans to develop standards for the setting aside of land for parks and civic uses so as to create whole communities, not just bedroom communities. Many of these parks and civic use sites should be located near the planned greenways and trail system. All must be connected to the surrounding neighborhoods by sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly streets.

Mixed Use Center

Within the Community Residential Areas, a number of Mixed Use Centers have been located. The Mixed Use Centers must be developed in at least two uses, one of which must be either community or neighborhood retail development or a community or neighborhood park. Other uses permitted include residential-scale offices, townhouses, and multifamily residential buildings. Residential areas within a Mixed Use Center can have a maximum density of up to 16 dwelling units per net acre of residential area, or up to 10 units per acre of gross project area. (The County will amend the zoning ordinance to allow for such densities.) The uses within the center must be integrated through architectural treatments, landscape and streetscape improvements, and connecting streets and sidewalks. Isolation of uses will not be permitted. Mixed Use Centers may be the retail core or “downtown” for a TND. Mixed Use Centers must be served by public water and sewer systems and are to be connected to the surrounding neighborhood grid of streets. Parking should be located in on-street parallel spaces, and to the sides or rear of buildings.

Commercial

These areas are comprised of existing community retail, professional offices, and retail/office mixed use areas, as well as planned expansions of such areas along the

County's primary roads. They also include commercial areas oriented to serving the traveling public and located at interstate interchanges or major intersections. Commercial areas are planned for public water and sewer service and should offer connecting streets and sidewalks where appropriate. Interparcel access and connections to rear parallel access roads are essential to maintaining traffic safety and flow along the fronting arterials. New commercial areas must be landscaped to reduce the visual impacts of large parking lots. Most of the parking should be located to the sides or rear of buildings.

Industrial

Industrial Areas offer major areas for industrial development within the County. Manufacturers, both large and small, are to be located in these areas that are or will be served by public water and sewer systems and offer good access to primary roads and I-81. Other appropriate uses include distribution centers, wholesale and warehouse establishments, research and development companies, flex space, and offices. Accessory commercial uses are also permitted, including lunchrooms and delis within employment buildings, and business service uses: copy shops, mailing centers, equipment rental, and computer and equipment repair shops.

Town / City

The maps show the boundaries of the Towns and City of Harrisonburg, which are current as of the date of adoption of this Plan. These are separate jurisdictions, each with its own planning and zoning authority. However, the County desires to continue to work closely with each Town and the City of Harrisonburg to coordinate land use, utility and transportation planning decisions for mutual benefit.

Public Lands

The Federal Government owns Shenandoah National Park and the George Washington National Forest. The State owns Paul State Forest and Deep Run Pond Natural Area Preserve. Rockingham County has no jurisdiction governing the use of these lands. However, it is the County's policy to encourage the federal and state governments to continue to use these lands for preservation, forest conservation, recreation, and park uses. The County intends to develop a trail system, using its Greenways and Environmental Resource Areas, to connect with trails and recreation resources where appropriate.

Other Areas

Two other designations are shown on the future land use map that are not land use areas per se, but are policy elements that influence land use. These are also considered as "overlays" to the land use area designations.

Urban Growth Areas. The designated Urban Growth Areas adjacent to growing unincorporated areas, such as McGaheysville and Massanutten, plus the Towns and City are areas that are planned for public infrastructure expansion and urban growth. Several Comprehensive Plan Land Use designations are included within these Urban Growth areas, such as Community Residential, Mixed Use Center, Commercial, Industrial, Greenways and Environmental Resource Areas.

For most Towns, these Urban Growth Areas are potential future annexation areas. Mt. Crawford, along with Dayton and Bridgewater, are all contained within the Urban Growth Area around Harrisonburg. Broadway, Elkton, Grottoes, and Timberville each has a separate Urban Growth Area. It is the County's intention to harmonize land use within these Urban Growth Areas, particularly for those county lands not yet under the control of the Towns.

An Urban Growth Area is intended to provide a sharp distinction between urban and rural uses and to aid in the protection of the County's rural character over the next fifty years. Note that the growth within these Urban Growth Areas occurs in a phased manner. To achieve this pattern of development, it is critical that development in Urban Growth Areas occurs on public water and sewer and adheres to the principles of traditional neighborhood development. Where urban services and facilities are available within an Urban Growth Area, development is encouraged and where it is absent it is discouraged. These measures will allow for the efficient movement of traffic, both motorized and non-motorized, and minimize public infrastructure cost.

Higher urban development densities allow the Agricultural Reserve, in the remainder of the County, to continue as a rural, predominantly agricultural, area. Together, the higher density Urban Growth Areas and the lower density Agricultural Reserve work together to build the kind of County we desire.

Special Corridors. Critical transportation corridors such as Routes 33, 11 and 42 are planned for special attention to coordinate access, create parallel roadways and closely manage adjacent land uses in order to maintain the function and capacity of these important roads.

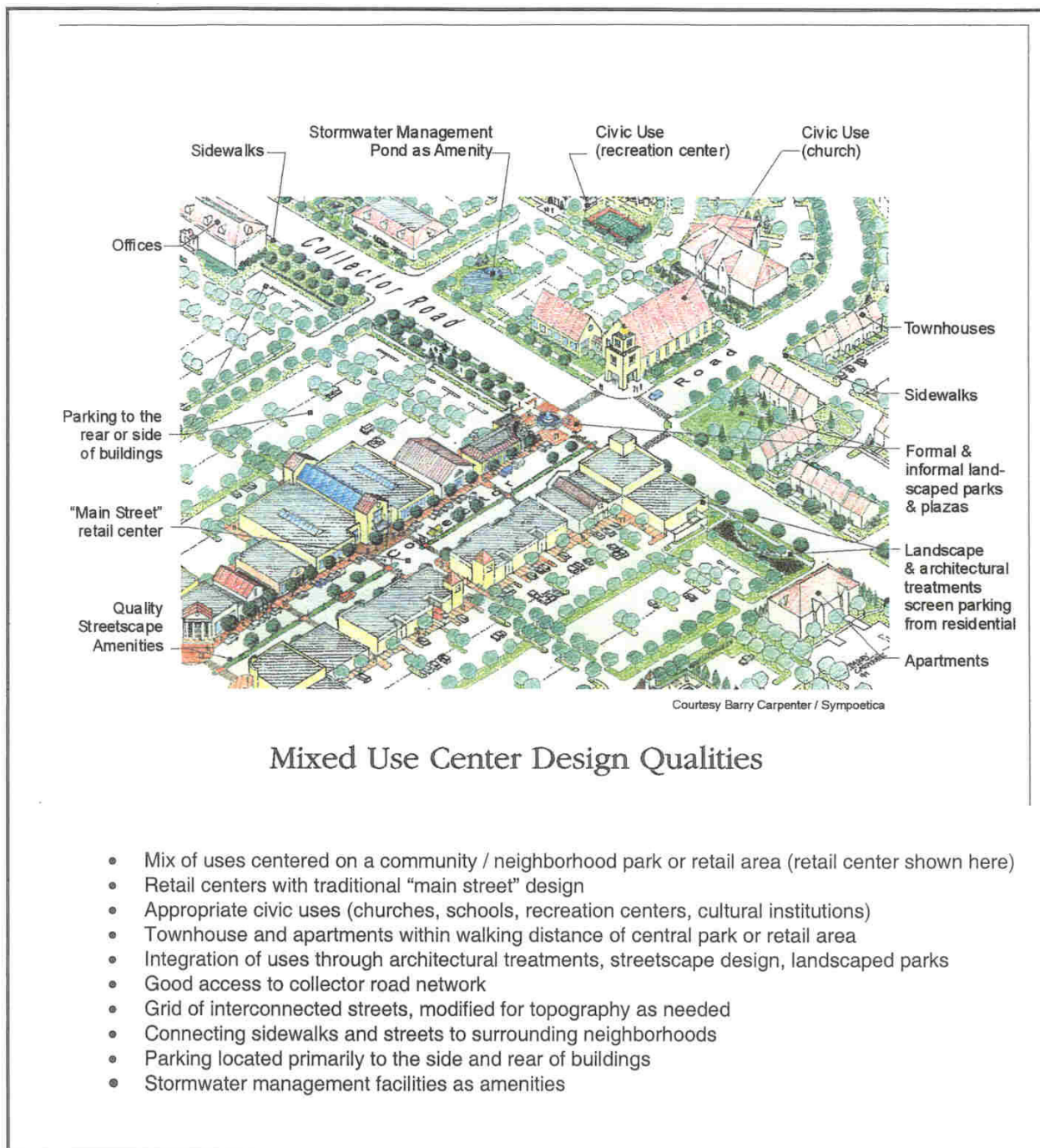
Figure 2-2**Mixed Use Center Design Qualities**

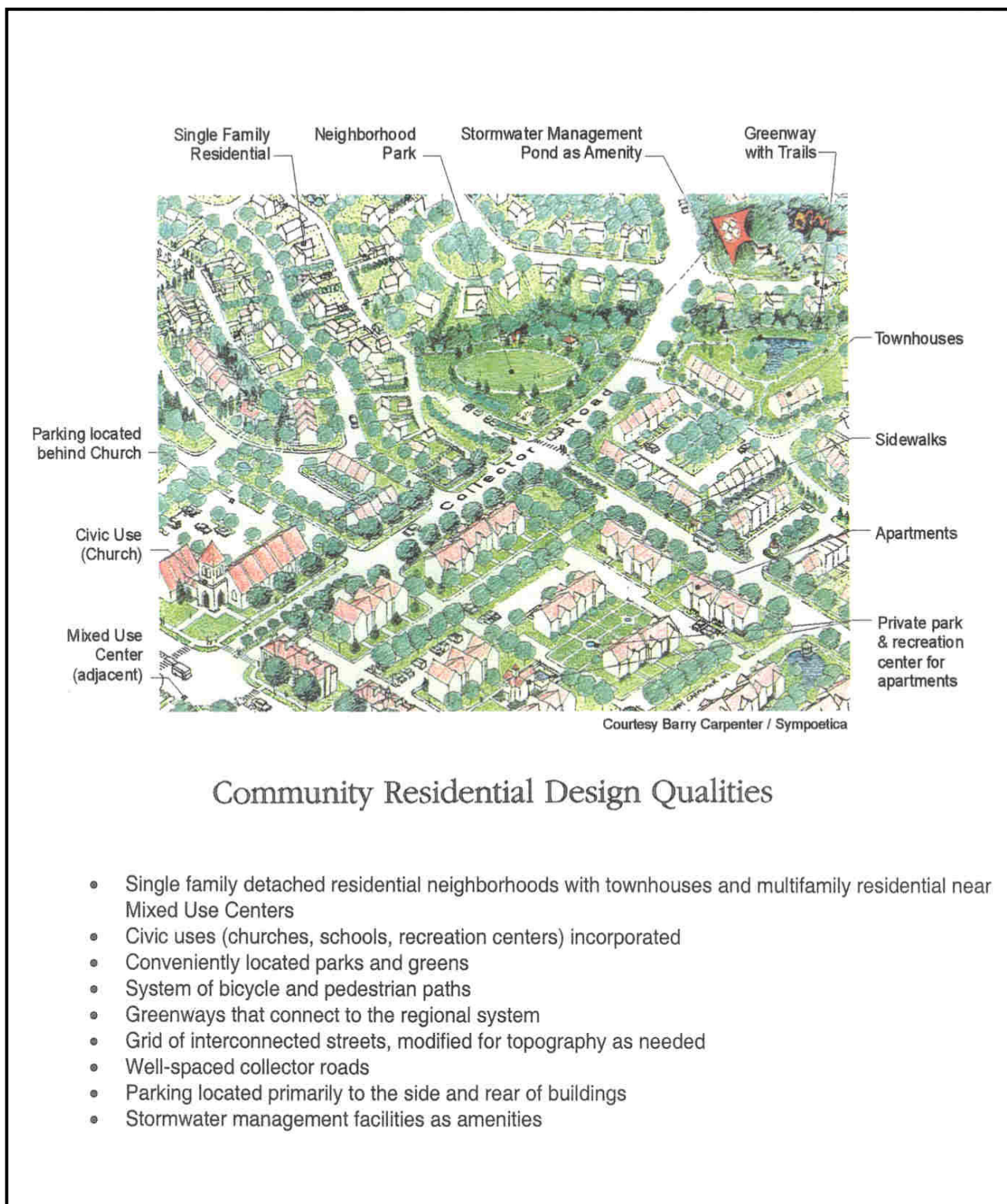
Figure 2-3**Community Residential Design Qualities**

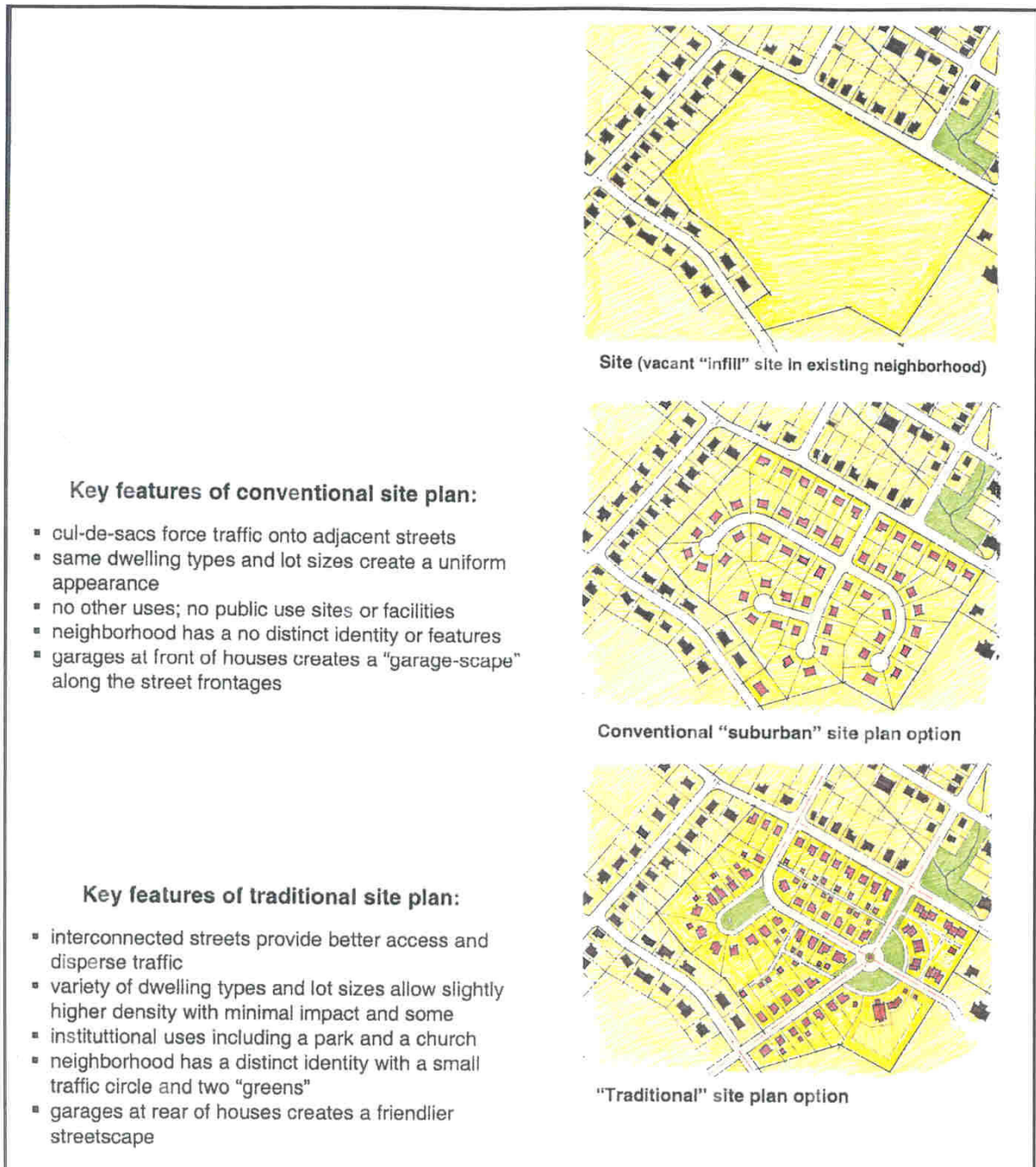
Figure 2-4**Traditional Residential Design Principles - Example One**

Figure 2-5**Traditional Residential Design Principles - Example Two****Key features of conventional site plan:**

- cul-de-sacs force traffic onto adjacent streets
- same dwelling types and lot sizes create a uniform appearance
- no other uses; no public use sites or facilities
- neighborhood has a no distinct identity or features
- no opportunity to preserve significant open space areas or create usable open space parks

**Conventional "suburban" site plan option****Key features of traditional site plan:**

- interconnected streets provide better access and disperse traffic
- variety of dwelling types and lot sizes allow slightly higher density with minimal impact and some
- institutional uses including a park and a church
- neighborhood has a distinct identity with a well-defined central "green" and smaller "greens" throughout the site
- significant open space areas preserved and significant usable park sites created

**"Traditional" site plan option**

Figure 2-6**Traditional Residential Design Principles - Example Three**

Conventional “suburban” style site plan for property at the edge of town – Features very little open space and uniform dwelling types and lot sizes



Clustered development pattern featuring traditional urban design techniques - Features significant open space, internal “green” for visual identity, mix of dwelling types and lot sizes, mix of land uses and thus potentially higher development value

